

Nancy Arbito
Childcare Learning Centers, Inc.
Before the Human Services Committee
Support SB1044 AAC Recoupment of State Costs Attributable to Low Wage Employers
March 5, 2015

Senator Moore and, Representative Abercombie, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Arbito; I am bilingual and a Head Teacher with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood field and I am deeply concerned about early childhood teacher wages. I want to thank you for your attention and the opportunity to express my concern.

I am writing this testimony in support SB1044 AAC the Recoupment of State Costs Attributable to Low Wage Employers.

As you know, this bill would require large employers paying less than \$15 per hour to pay a fee to the state. The funds generated from this fee will be appropriated to the Department of Social Services and Development Services and the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Currently this bill applies to low wage employers with 500 or more employees. We would request that the committee reduce this to employers with 250 employees.

It is imperative that the funds appropriated to the OEC be used to improve early childhood education in the state with an emphasis on raising the wages of early childhood teachers like myself.

I have eighteen years working as a preschool teacher; two years for a private program in Greenwich and sixteen years for the Childcare Learning Centers in Stamford. I am a mother of three grown up children and I live with my husband. We moved to Connecticut looking for a better life for our children and a promising future for my husband and me. We have been very happy and our children have had a stable and comfortable life while growing up. But balancing the financial aspect has been a struggle; between mortgage, education, health care, and many more bills to pay monthly; money has not been enough to live a more relaxing life and be able to save for a retirement, especially when we are getting older.

Currently I am working twelve month and making less than \$35,000.00. It is a salary that does not compensate that job that we do. I am a professional teacher that strives for the best for my each of my students and their families.

I respectfully request your time and attention to the low wages issue in the early childhood field and that it is much valuable to keep our classrooms equipped with high educated teachers and continue improving the educational system.

Thank You!